

REMARKS

Claims 1-2, 6-7, 10, 12-13, 17-21, 24, 29, and 31 remain pending after amendment.

Claim Amendments

By this amendment, claims 11, 28, 30 and 32-33 are canceled. The limitations of claims 28 and 30 are added to claims 1 and 7, respectively. Claim 11 is canceled as being a duplicate of claim 7. The dependencies of claims 12, 29 and 31 are revised accordingly. No new matter is added by this amendment.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowability of the subject matter of claims 28-33. By this amendment, the limitations of claims 28 and 30 are incorporated into claims 1 and 7, respectively. As all independent claims now incorporate subject matter deemed to be allowable, all pending claims are believed to be in condition for allowance.

Rejection of Claims 1-2 and 10 under 35 USC 103(a)

Claims 1-2 and 10 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Akihiko JP 09-003755 in view of Schleinz et al U.S. Patent No. 5,612,118, Carey U.S. Patent No. 4,551,378, and Bergman et al U.S. Patent No. 5,624,427.

In response, the limitations of allowed claim 28 are added to rejected claim 1. As all pending claims now incorporate, either directly or indirectly, allowable subject matter, the rejection is thus moot and should be withdrawn.

Rejection of Claims 6-7, 11-13, 17-19, 20-21 and 24 under 35 USC 103(a)

Claims 6-7, 11-13, 17-19, 20-21 and 24 stand rejected as being unpatentable under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Akihiko '755 in view of Schleinz, Zelazoski et al, Bergman et al and Carey.

In response, the limitations of allowed claims 30 and 32 are incorporated into claims 1 and 7, respectively, with claim 11 being canceled. As all pending claims now incorporate, either directly or indirectly, allowable subject matter, the rejection is thus moot and should be withdrawn.

The application is now believed to be in condition for allowance and an early indication of same is earnestly solicited.

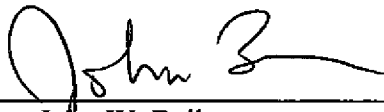
In the event that any outstanding matters remain in this application, applicants request that the Examiner contact James W. Hellwege (Reg. No. 28,808) at (703) 205-8000 to discuss such matters.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: May 16, 2007

Very truly yours,

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By 
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JWB/JWH/ej

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